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ABSTRACT

New roles and relationships are being proposed in the literature dealing with the restructuring of teacher education. The linkages called for among teacher education faculties, liberal arts faculties, and public school personnel will result in role definitions that are significantly different from those that currently exist. Role theory provides both a framework and a process for defining and analyzing roles and role expectations. Through analysis of expectations held for interacting roles, areas of ambiguity and potential conflict can be identified. When this analysis is not undertaken, consensus regarding role definitions can be assumed to exist when in reality it does not. If this misperception continues, it can prevent the development of viable relationships. This paper presents: a framework for analyzing role relationships based on role theory, a process for analyzing expectations for new roles or redefinitions of existing roles, and a process for resolving conflicts that emerge from this role analysis. The process is illustrated by suggestions on its application in a specific context by those involved in defining roles for a professional development school. The positions selected to illustrate the application are: college-based teacher educators, school-based teacher educators, and parent/community groups. The conflict resolution stage is taken from Alan C. Filley's integrative decision making approach. Directions for a group process experience and a worksheet are included. (LL)

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A Process for Identifying and Resolving Role Conflict in the Restructuring of Teacher Education

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New roles and relationships are being proposed in the literature dealing with the restructuring of teacher education. The linkages called for among teacher education faculties, liberal arts faculties, public school personnel and other groups will result in role definitions that are significantly different from those that currently exist. There is, however, no concomitant attention being given to identifying a process for analyzing the expectations that may be held for these new roles nor to identifying a process for resolving the conflicts that may emerge from differences in expectations.

Role Theory

Role theory provides both a framework and a process for defining and analyzing roles and role expectations. Through the analysis of expectations held for interacting roles, areas of ambiguity and potential conflict can be identified. When this analysis is not undertaken, consensus regarding role definitions can be assumed to exist when in reality it does not. If this misperception continues, it can prevent the development of viable relationships.

Role theory, which attempts to conceptualize patterns of human conduct, is a relatively new field of study that has evolved within several of the social sciences. The first focus on the concerns of *role* appeared in the late 1920s and early

1930s in the studies of anthropologists, sociologists and psychologists. This interdisciplinary input has continued throughout the development of role theory as a field of study. In identifying the contributions to role theory from the various behavioral sciences, Sarbin (1954) states that "...its variables are drawn from the studies of culture, society and personality" (p. 223).

Role theory is used to describe the activities of participants in interpersonal relationships. Because the terms *role* and *role expectation* are used differently in various contexts, it is necessary to define clearly what is meant by those designations here.

> Role Expectation: an evaluative standard applied to an occupant of a position (i.e. what an individual is expected to do in a given situation, both by himself and by others).
>
> Role: a set of expectations applied to an occupant of a particular position.
>
> (Garland, 1982, p. 53)

Expectations may be acquired through intentional instruction and/or incidental learning and may originate from personal or vicarious experience. Biddle (1979, p. 218) considered expectations to be a central focus of role theory and identified three types of expectations:

> enunciations: overtly expressed expectations
> conceptions: covertly held expectations
> Inscriptions: written expectations

Two additional elements of the role concept are *consensus* and *conflict*.

> Role consensus: a state that exists when similar expectations are held for an occupant of a position.
>
> Role conflict: a state that exists when contradictory expectations are held for an occupant of a position.
>
> (Garland, 1982), p. 53.)

Application of Role Theory

One example which demonstrates the way in which the restructuring of teacher education will create new roles and relationships is found in the concept of the professional development school. The achievement of the objectives being proposed for these institutions (collaboration between public schools and higher education in preparing teachers, conducting research and supporting new approaches to teaching) will require the redefinition of roles such as college-based teacher educator (C-BTE), school-based teacher educator (S-BTE) and parents/community (P/C).[1] It is important, therefore, to analyze the

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[1] Drummond (1978), in Emerging professional roles for teacher educators, uses the term "college-based teacher educators" to refer to personnel who work in schools, college, or departments of education. Houston (1978), in the same monograph, uses the term "school-based teacher educators" to refer to personnel who are responsible for preservice, inservice, or continuing education and whose primary base of operations is in an elementary or secondary school.

expectations held for each role to identify areas of ambiguity and conflict.

In order to examine expectations for roles, it is necessary to view the roles as an interaction system. Figure 1 (adapted from Garland, 1982) represents a way of viewing the relationships among the positions of those involved in professional development schools as an interaction system. The positions selected to illustrate this concept include: college-based teacher educator, school-based teacher educator and parent/community groups. The way in which the positions are related is indicated by the double arrows which signify two-way relationships. Each position is separated into positional sectors that illustrate the relationship of one position to the other two positions. For each of the three positions, two positional sectors have been left blank to indicate that only a limited set of positions is shown in the diagram. College-based teacher educators, school-based teacher educators and parents/community also interact with college students, school pupils and a variety of other school personnel. In separating each position into sectors, recognition is given to the existence of these additional relationships.

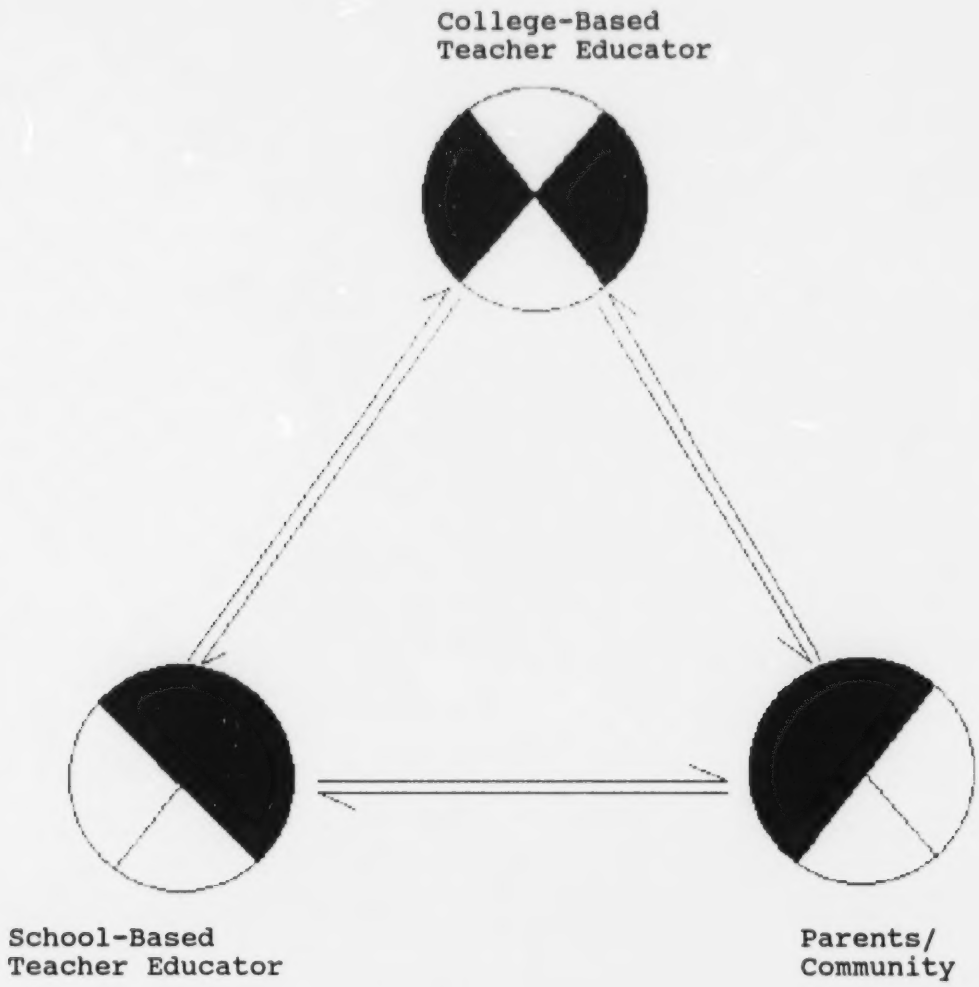

Figure 1. System Diagram Indicating Relationships Among the Positions of College-Based Teacher Educator, School-Based Teacher Educator and Parents/Community.

Within this framework, each role can be viewed in terms of its relationship to the other roles. For example, attention can be focused on consensus between college-based teacher educators and school-based teacher educators on the expectations they hold for the parents/community. Another possibility would be to examine the expectations held for college-based teacher educators by school-based teacher educators, members of the parents/community group and college-based teacher educators themselves. As the framework is used to analyze the expectations held for each position, the amount of consensus that exists on role definitions can be assessed. The identification of ambiguity and potential conflict through this analysis can serve as the basis for planning and implementing ways of bringing about increased clarity and consensus in regard to role definitions.

The following sections of this paper will describe a process for identifying and resolving role conflict and illustrate its use by suggesting the way in which it can be applied in a specific context by those involved in defining roles for a professional development school.

Analyzing Role Definitions

In order to analyze role definitions, it is necessary first to identify the expectations held for the occupants of the interacting roles. The following example outlines expectations for roles involved in professional development schools. While the roles of college-based teacher educator, school-based teacher

educator and parent/community are complex. the following are broad expectations that could be held for the occupants of these positions:

Expectations for the Role of College-Based Teacher Educator

- Involve school-based teacher educators in the development and delivery of the pre-service teacher education program.
- Provide supervisory training for school-based teacher educators.
- Demonstrate knowledge/awareness of programs, curricula and limitations in the public schools

Expectations for the Role of School-Based Teacher Educator

- Participate in the development and delivery of the pre-service teacher education program.
- Provide a quality program for all children regardless of social, cultural or economic background.
- Identify school-based issues for action-research projects.

Expectations for the Role of Parents/Community

- Provide input on grade level curricular decisions.
- Identify and coordinate community resources (personnel, programs, sites) that will support/enrich the program of the professional development school.

Once expectations have been identified, it is important to analyze them to determine whether they clearly define the desired behaviors. As expectations are reviewed, any that seem ambiguous will need to be redefined so that the meaning is clear to everyone involved. For example, the expectations that address the development and delivery of the pre-service teacher education program could be redefined more specifically as follows:

Development and Delivery of the Preservice Teacher Education Program

College-Based Teacher Educators	School-Based Teacher Educators	Parents/Community
Identify the essential content of the professional core courses.	Provide input on decisions regarding the essential content of the professional core courses.	Provide information on community for college-based teacher education students.
Decide which professional activities are best conducted at the college and which in the schools.	Participate in lectures/discussions, demonstrations, simulated lessons and analysis of critical incidents.	Assist in providing time, space, facilities and equipment to support the activities of the professional development school.
Have an adequate understanding of specific school programs.	Provide college-based teacher educators with information regarding the school program, curriculum and limitations.	Provide financial support.
Identify evaluation methods to be used to measure performance in school-based segments of the teacher education program.	Participate in establishing criteria for evaluation.	Share community concerns regarding teacher effectiveness.

When expectations for each role are clearly defined, areas of potential conflict may be identified. For example, an examination of the preceding expectations may reveal several areas of conflict.

Conflict Resolution

The literature of conflict theory presents two views of conflict (Milton, 1981, pp. 428-429). In the older view, conflict was seen as a breakdown of interpersonal interaction and, therefore, a condition to be eliminated or avoided. In the newer view, the elimination of conflict is seen as neither realistic or desirable. Proponents of this view argue that constructive conflict is necessary for new challenges, the stimulation of problem solutions, and adaptations to change. In this view, then, conflict is inevitable and desirable and should be encouraged within limits.

Strategies for dealing with conflict are generally categorized as win-lose strategies, lose-lose strategies or win-win strategies (Milton, 1981, pp. 434-440). Win-lose strategies make use of authority, majority rule or minority rule (domination of a group by one or two members). The result is that only one party wins or achieves its objectives. The outcome of lose-lose strategies is that neither party achieves its objective, or achieves its objective only partially. Avoidance of others, concealing beliefs and feelings and minimizing differences between parties are examples of lose-lose

strategies. Reaching a compromise also represents a lose-lose strategy since it is likely that both parties will be dissatisfied with the result.

Filley, in Interpersonal Conflict Resolution (1975), describes two win-win strategies: consensus and integrative decision making. Both strategies focus on goals and seek a solution that is mutually acceptable to all parties. They differ, however, in that "integrative methods are more concerned with sequencing the decision process through a series of steps and is [sic] particularly useful when the parties become polarized around a few solutions" (Milton, 1981, p. 438).

Filley (1975, p. 30) identifies the focus of integrative decision making as defeating the problem rather than defeating other people. He lists (pp. 92-93) the following stages in the integrative decision making process:

1) Review and adjustment of relational conditions
2) Review and adjustment of perceptions
3) Review and adjustment of attitudes
4) Problem definition
5) Search for solutions
6) Consensus decision

The first three stages of the integrative decision making process involve the review and adjustment of relational conditions, perceptions and attitudes. In the first step, the conditions in which the parties are related (e.g., space, time, group size, communication channels) are compared with conditions

that promote cooperation, and those conditions that can be adjusted are identified. In steps two and three, the parties assess the accuracy of their perceptions and attitudes in light of objective evidence and the perceptions of others and then attempt to make whatever adjustments seem appropriate.

When the first three stages have been considered, the parties then turn to the remaining stages in the process which involve "...careful problem definition, an exhaustive and nonjudgmental search for alternative solutions, and a decision-making process based on evaluation and agreement" (Filley, 1975, p. 108).

These stages, from Chapter 8 of Interpersonal Conflict Resolution, are outlined here:

Stage 4: Problem definition

1. State the problem as a goal (or goals). Parties may have different goals, but each must accept the goals of the other.
2. Separate the process of problem definition from the search for solutions.
3. Focus on specific goals, not on solutions.

Stage 5: Search for alternatives

1. Generate solutions (may include the use of nominal groups, brainstorming, surveys, discussions or outside help).
2. Avoid evaluating solutions.
3. Generate as many solutions as possible.

Stage 6: Evaluation of solutions and arrival at argument

1. Narrow the range of solutions to those that are both good and acceptable to all parties.
2. Identify and apply criteria for evaluating the solutions.
3. Agree on a solution that is acceptable to all parties.

Filley (1975) summarizes his discussion of these stages by concluding that "...the IDM [Integrative Decision Making] approach to problem solving results in better decisions, greater acceptance of decisions, and reduced hostility among the concerned parties" (p. 137).

Applying a Process of Role Conflict Resolution

This process of role conflict resolution can be applied to the conflict that may arise among the roles involved in the professional development school. In order to experience the process of role conflict resolution, complete the following steps on the worksheet on page 13.

1. Form groups of three with each participant representing one of these roles: College-based teacher educator, school-based teacher educator, parents/community.

2. Review the expectations on page 8 and identify areas of potential conflict. Conflict may be seen to exist among all three roles or within diads (C-BTE/S-BTE, CBTE/P/C, or S-BTE/P/C).

3. Select one issue of conflict and identify the roles involved. Record this information on the worksheet.

4. Apply stages four, five and six of the conflict resolution process. (Refer to page 11.)

5. Use the worksheet to record your responses during problem definition, search for alternatives and evaluation of solutions.

Worksheet — Applying a Process of Role Conflict Resolution

Record identified conflict and roles involved:

Conflict may occur between _____ and _____ because:

Stage 4: Problem Definition

State the problem as a goal(s):

Stage 5: Search for Alternatives

Generate solutions:

Stage 6: Evaluation of Solutions and Arrival at Agreement

Identify good and acceptable solutions:

Identify and apply criteria for evaluating solutions:

Agree on a solution acceptable to all parties:

The process of analyzing possible expectations for roles involved in the professional development school has demonstrated the potential for conflict among the parties and the need for a second process to resolve this conflict. These roles are but one example of the many new roles and role relationships that are emerging from the restructuring of teacher education. The identification and resolution of potential conflict are important considerations that can bring about consensus regarding the new roles and serve as a basis for future planning and implementation.

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